

Subject: Proposed SR killer whale habitat too limited
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Date: Sat, 12 Aug 2006 21:32:00 -0700
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As currently proposed, the critical habitat area for the Southern Resident killer whales is insufficient to support adequate population growth to ensure survival of this species. Water quality, noise and bright light reduction, restoration of habitat, protection of potential and historical habitat, and including of all Puget Sound waterways must be included in the current proposal.

As a lifelong resident (more than half a century) of Dabob Bay, I have testified and produced photographs that demonstrate that the Southern Residents were frequent and regular users of Hood Canal far more frequently than in other areas being included in the current proposal for protected habitat. Salmon-eating killer whales were so common in Hood Canal that most people did not think to take pictures. They were simply part of our lives, something we saw as part of the seascape.

As well as demonstrating use of Hood Canal as frequent habitat, one of my photographs also shows members of J pod extremely close to the shore as they follow our family sailboat. If shallow water along the shoreline is excluded, then damage to the shoreline will continue throughout the SR range. The same applies to levels of noise and bright light. Noise and unnecessary bright lights should be mitigated as part of the proposed protected area.

The Olympic National Marine Sanctuary as well as other areas of the Pacific Coast should also be included in the proposed habitat.

Focus for SR recovery should be based on restoration of habitat and water quality, not on reduction of fish harvest by tribes. Protection and restoration as well as improvement of water quality in Hood Canal and all of Puget Sound will not only help expand the SR populations, but improve the quality of life, tourism, and future for all of Washington State.

Respectfully yours

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